



## WINE

### Viognier for May

No wine picks up on the mood of the blooming season like Viognier. Shamelessly floral and aromatic, with honey and tangerine flavors, the best versions also have a hit of crisp acid. The white grape is traditionally grown in France's Rhône Valley, but more winemakers in the West—in places from Washington to California's Central Coast—are bottling it now. Here are some of our new favorites—all 2004 vintages except the Griffin Creek, a 2003.

**Freemark Abbey** (Rutherford, CA; \$25)

**Griffin Creek** (Rogue Valley, OR; \$25)

**McDowell Valley Vineyards** (Mendocino County; \$16)

**Stags' Leap Winery** (Napa Valley; \$25)

**Turnbull Wine Cellars** (Oakville, CA; \$30)

**Waterbrook Winery** (Columbia Valley, WA; \$17)

## TASTE TEST

### Favorite caramels

They're the little indulgences you reach for again and again—rich, buttery, and sweet, with just a hint of salt to sharpen and focus flavor. From 14 Western artisan candy companies, we picked 4 winners, each with its own distinct taste, from soft and floral to smoky and deeply caramelized.



#### Lillie Belle Farms

Lavender fans will love this one from Oregon—a hearty floral combination of herb and salt mixed with melty, soft caramel. *Lavender Fleur de Sel Caramels*, \$18 for 1/2 lb.; [www.lilliebellefarms.com](http://www.lilliebellefarms.com) or 888/899-2022.



#### Little Flower Candy Co.

A classic sweet chew for fans of old-school, waxed paper-wrapped candies. Handmade by a mom turned candy-maker in L.A. *Vanilla Caramels*, \$6.50 for 1/4 lb.; [www.littleflowercandyco.com](http://www.littleflowercandyco.com) or 323/551-5948.



#### Recchiuti Confections

The richest and most darkly caramelized of any candy we tasted—complex, smoky, and elegant. From the famed chocolate company in San Francisco. *Fleur de Sel caramels*, \$20 for 16 pieces; [www.recchiuticonfections.com](http://www.recchiuticonfections.com) or 800/500-3396.



#### Woodhouse Chocolate

Dipped in rich chocolate and delicately sprinkled with sea salt, these offer excellent quality for the price. The Napa Valley-based owners launched their business after seeing the movie *Chocolat*. *Chocolate caramels*, \$10 for 10 pieces; [www.woodhousechocolate.com](http://www.woodhousechocolate.com) or 800/966-3468.